

# The Role of Employment in Recovery

Improving Supports and Outcomes for  
consumers in WA State

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# Clark County Washington



## CCRSN's Recovery Vision Statement

- *Recovery requires recognition by everyone of each person's unlimited potential. It compassionately encourages self-determination through respect, support, meaningful choices and understanding. Recovery is maintained and achieved through a continuum of connected, relevant supportive, individualized services and is reflected in all related language.*

# Strengths in Place in Clark County

- Individualized and Tailored Care philosophy
- Capacity in every mandated service delivery area.
- Clark County's Children's Community of Care Advisory Council.
- Well established evaluation & quality assurance processes.
- Powerful & flexible management information system

# History of Collaboration/Innovation

- System of Care Grant to redesign the children & family service system
  - Universal, Targeted, Intensive Services
  - Implemented Peer Parent Partners
  - Collaboration between agencies
- Out of Despair - Creation of the Youth House
  - Youth Commission
  - Teen Talk Line
  - Suicide Prevention Programs
- System of Care Analysis

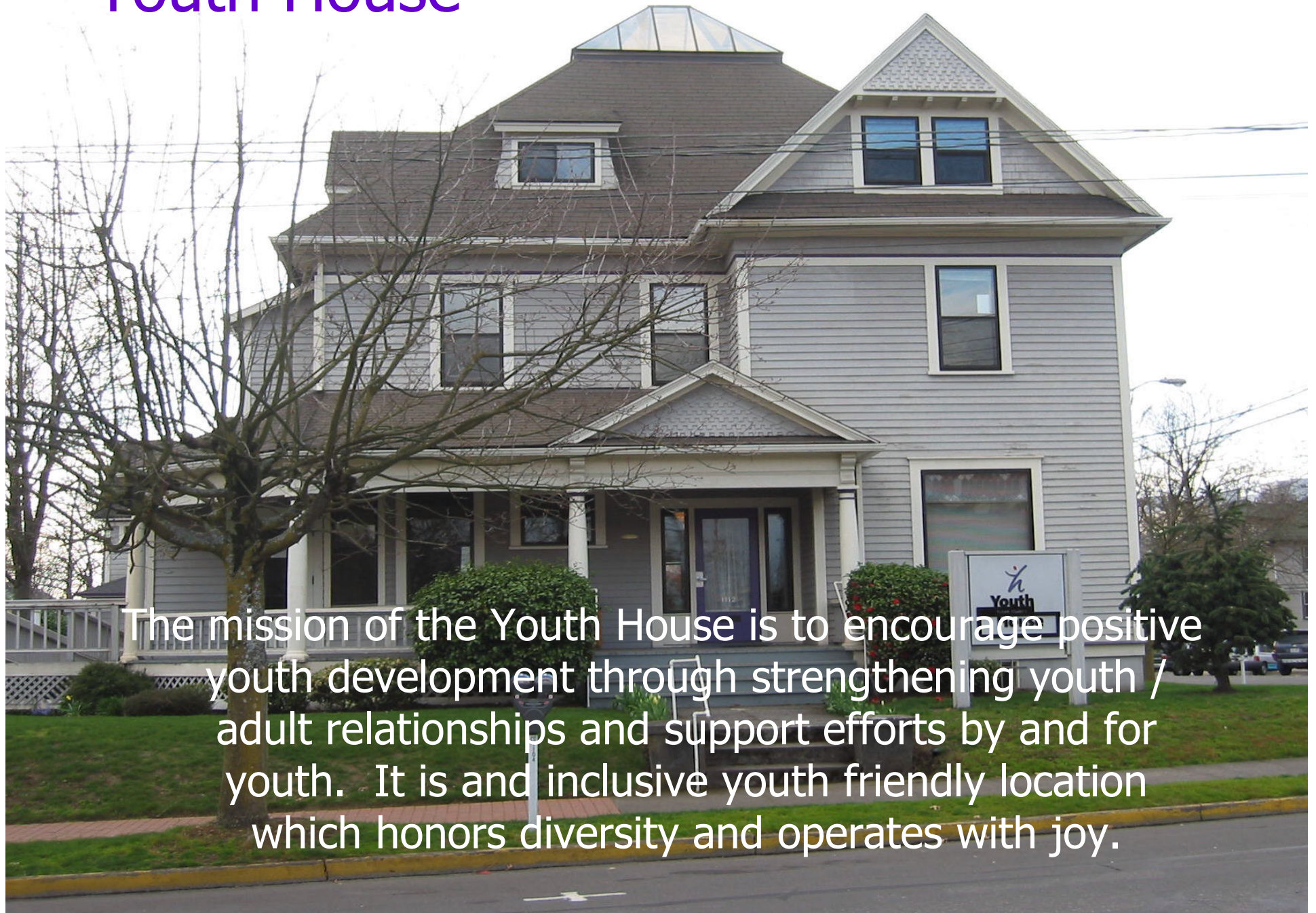
**In September and October 2003 interviewers from Portland State University conducted 107 structured interviews with programs identified as part of the Clark County Network.**

**Timing of interviews provided a baseline picture of the transition service delivery system.**

**Interviewers spoke with a person from each program who knew the program well and its relationships with other programs in the area. The interviews addressed the relationships the program had with each other program in the network, the nature of the program, and respondents' opinions about the transition system.**



# Youth House



The mission of the Youth House is to encourage positive youth development through strengthening youth / adult relationships and support efforts by and for youth. It is an inclusive youth friendly location which honors diversity and operates with joy.



# Youth Commission





# Teen Talk



# Youth Meeting Space



## Clark County Options

(a.k.a. Partnerships for Youth Transition)

- In September 2002, Clark County was awarded a grant from SAMHSA to fund the Partnership for Youth Transition project.
- Goal: To implement enhancements to the existing system of care to further develop a comprehensive, integrated system for transition age youth.

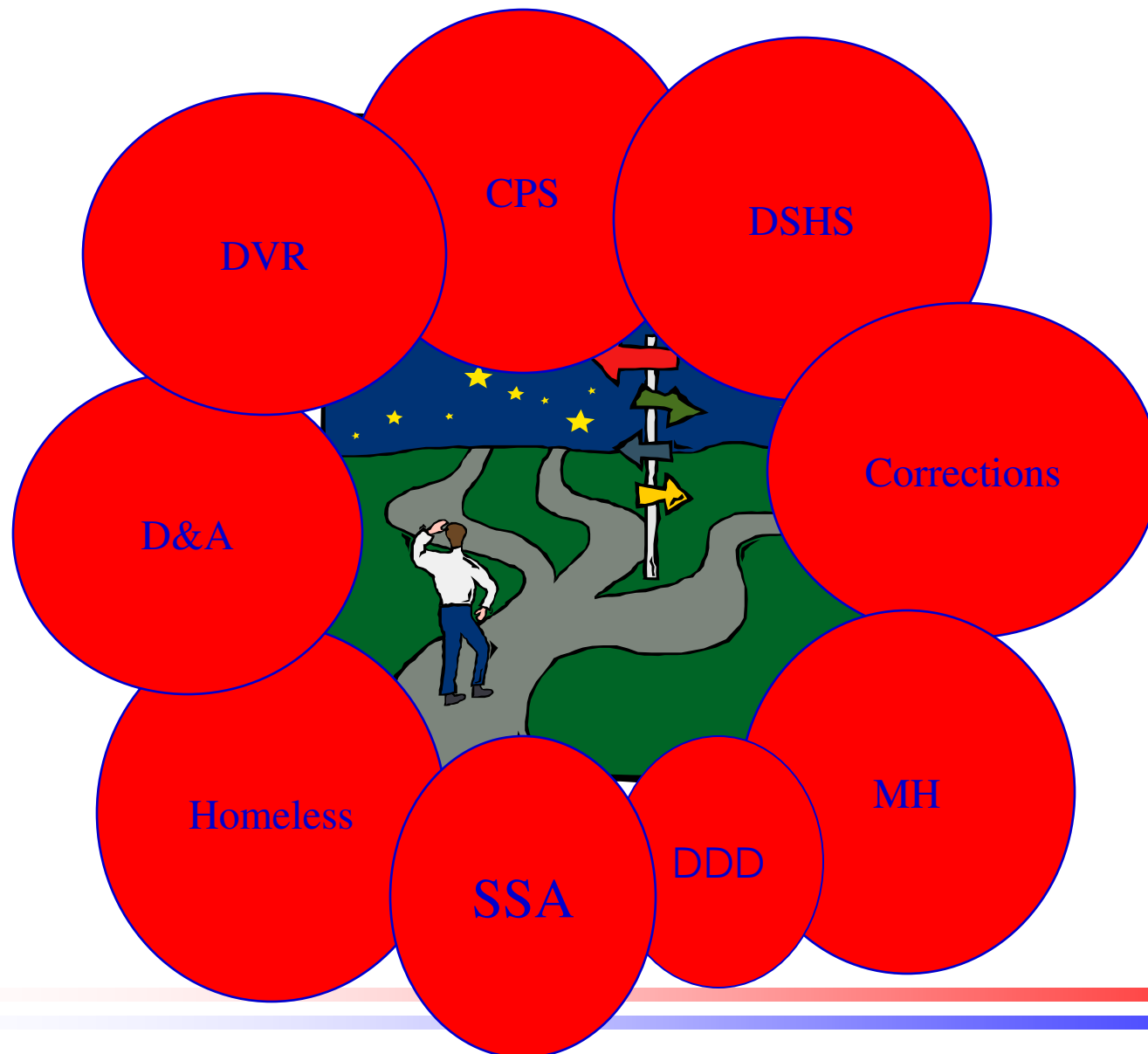
# Clark County Partnerships for Youth Transition



An In-depth Perspective on our  
Juvenile Justice Youth Population



## Systems involved in one person's life??

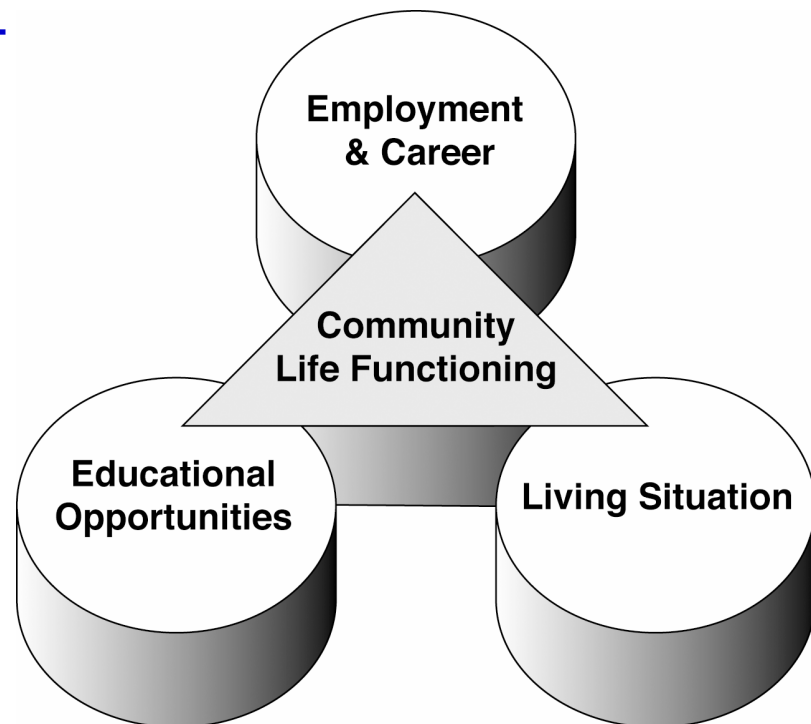


# Partnership for Youth Transition – Options Program

- Clark county residents 14-25 years of age (must be enrolled by age 21)
- Who are in, or at imminent risk of, an out of home placement (incarceration, hospitalization, homelessness, etc.)...
- Who have at least one DSM-IV diagnosis that prevents them from functioning in family, school, and/or community.
- Who voluntarily consent to participate
- Family members of participating youth will be involved at their and the youth's discretion

# Services Provided Based on the TIP Model

1. Engage young people through relationship development, person-centered planning, and a focus on their futures.
2. Tailor services and supports to be accessible, coordinated, developmentally-appropriate, and build on strengths to enable the young people to pursue their goals across all transition domains.
3. Acknowledge and develop personal choice and social responsibility with young people.
4. Ensure a safety-net of support by involving a young person's parents, family members, and other informal and formal key players.
5. Enhance young persons' competencies to assist them in achieving greater self-sufficiency and confidence.
6. Maintain an outcome focus in the TIP system at the young person, program, and community levels.
7. Involve young people, parents, and other community partners in the TIP system at the practice, program, and community levels.



## System Change as a result of this project:

- Service Providers are able to serve beyond 18 years of age – providers are not licensed by age but by services
- The Power of Youth Voice in all aspects of service delivery
- MH Youth Services within a setting such as Youth House
- Employment Services as a modality for under 18 years of age
- Stronger Partnership with Schools, Youth WorkForce System
  - Homeless Youth Employment WIA Employment Specialist



# Options Recovery & Resiliency Principles

- **Self-directed** – Youth voice was at the core of all services, policies and processes for this program
- **Individualized** – Even though our community had a strong “wraparound” philosophy, youth directed who attended their services and service planning (this was contentious with family support orgs)
- **Empowered** – Youth voice is throughout this program (Youth Advisory Council developed)
- **Holistic** – The services, systems, community and family connections were all woven together
- **Non-Linear** – Particularly with employment, involvement with corrections
- **Strengths-Based** – Core Gift values, that every youth had a gift
- **Peer Support** – Options principle that each person has a story to share & Youth Coordinator Position created, Teen Talk
- **Respect** - No matter how many piercing, tattoos, or length of Rap sheet accepting the person for who they are and recognizing them as the expert in their own recovery
- **Responsibility** – The opportunity to teach youth about their own responsibility. Using Teaching Moments rather than being a Super Case Manager
- **HOPE** – Moving people “Beyond their Address”

## Evidence-Based Supported Employment Principles and How to apply to a Transition Age Youth Population:

- Eligibility is based on consumer choice
- Supported employment is integrated with treatment
- Competitive employment is the goal
- Job search starts soon after a consumer expresses interest in working
- Follow-along supports are continuous
- Consumer preferences are important

# Eligibility is based on consumer choice

- The idea of going to work for youth “hooked” them into the program.
- Zero Exclusion criteria: Services to “where the youth is at...” No matter how many piercings, how lengthy the criminal record was or how active the youth was involved with drugs and alcohol

## Supported employment is integrated with treatment

- The Options program was an enhancement to other services that the youth may be involved in and often the program they most engaged in
- Often Youth gravitated towards the Options program as they become autonomous to their family and systems
- Employment is normalizing and focuses on their skills, hopes and dreams as well as the financial incentives to move forward with their own goals



## Competitive employment is the goal

- Entry level jobs are very normal and a developmental stage for this population
- Facilitating relationships between Employers and the youth is a key element
- Andrew's story....

Job search starts soon after a consumer expresses interest in working

- Provide Services from: Survivor Jobs to Planting Career Pathway Seeds
- Opportunities for Teaching Moments
  - Teaching youth to “fish” while also “feeding” them
- Get youth “Beyond their Address” – build hope and dreams through tours, informational interviews also a key to engagement

# Follow-along supports are continuous

- Jobs as transitions is a key element for any youth in transition program (how many of you are in your first job?)
- Very Individualized
  - Most youth aren't going to want a Job Coach...
  - Opportunities for Teaching moments,
  - Tell your own stories
  - Cheerleading
- Helps youth realize what they don't want as well as what they like

# Consumer preferences are important

- Duh...
- Using Person Centered Planning to find a persons Interests, Preferences, Strengths, but sometimes more importantly "Conditions for Employment"
- There is a niche out there for everyone including those people who want to become Astronauts - For youth it's becoming Video Game Testers (and yes there are jobs out there like that...)



MARK TWAIN

" FEW THINGS ARE  
HARDER TO PUT UP WITH  
THAN THE ANNOYANCE  
OF  
A GOOD EXAMPLE"

# Options Statistics

Youth Enrolled in the Program	84
Percent of youth with D& A issues	48%
Percent of youth with a history of arrest	83%
Percent with involvement in Special Education	62%
Jobs Obtained	59*

# Lessons Learned

- It is ok to work “smarter” not “harder”.
- Develop a strong framework within which to conduct your work.
- Understand both adolescent brain development and the culture associated with adolescence.
- Do not ignore your data.
- Staff must understand and function in the capacity of an ally.
- As with all relationships, the “engagement” period is critical.
- The realization that our work was about a successful transition into adulthood vs. a successful transition into adult services.
- Question existing policy, rules and regulations.
- Services and supports must be developmentally appropriate and appealing.
- Challenge your community, staff and yourself to allow and embrace true youth voice and youth-driven services.